

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01066 071948Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPR-01 SS-14 PER-01 FS-01 OC-01
CCO-00 MED-01 SSO-00 A-01 ICAE-00 ABF-01 INR-05
INRE-00 SY-02 /039 W
-----044282 072002Z /47

O 071920Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6521
AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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LIMDIS

JOINT STATE/AID/ICA FOR ARA/MGT DIRECTOR WM. CALDERHEAD,

CARACAS FOR RSO FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI,ENRG, ABUD, AFSP, ASEC, APER

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR SAFEHAVEN OF DEPENDENTS

REF: GEORGETOWN 1058

1. AS POWER CRISIS CONTINUES, I AM CONSIDERING CAREFULLY THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF LOSS OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES REPORTED REFTEL ON OUR SMALL MISSION STAFF, AND PARTICULARLY ON DEPENDENTS. THOUGH EVERYONE IS BEARING UP SURPRISINGLY WELL, I WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT GEORGETOWN'S THIN RESOURCES HAVE DWINDLED ALARMINGLY IN FEW DAYS SINCE BREAKDOWN BEGAN. WE NOW UNDERSTAND THAT CRISIS MAY EXTEND AT LEAST 6 TO 8 RPT 6 TO 8 MORE WEEKS.

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2. SECURING POTABLE WATER, CANDLES OR LAMPS FOR WHICH FUEL MAY BE AVAILABLE, AND FINDING AND COOKING FOOD WHEN POWWER IS MADE AVAILABLE LOOM AS MAJOR PROBLEMS. MOST EMPLOYEES HAVE ELECTRIC STOVES. LITTLE OR NO WATER HAS BEEN SUPPLIED TO CITY HOUSES FOR LAST SIX DAYS. HIGH SALINE CONTENT AND IN SOME AREAS THE PRESENCE

OF LIVE WORMS IN WATER DETERS DRINKING. THE DETERIORATION OF WATER SUPPLY IS SERIOUS ENOUGH TO RAISE SPECTRE OF HEALTH PROBLEMS SOON. UNFORTUNATELY, PURE BOTTLED DRINKING WATER IS NOT AVAILABLE IN GEORGETOWN. EMBASSY IS CURRENTLY SUPPLYING CASES OF BOTTLED CLUB SODA AS ONLY VIABLE DRINKING SOURCE.

3. AVAILABILITY OF FOOD, NEVER PLENTIFUL, IS DECLINING. A NUMBER OF MARKETS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE, AND ONLY TWO ACCEPTABLE RESTAURANTS (EACH ATTACHED TO A HOTEL) ARE STILL FUNCTIONING. NO FLOUR IS BEING MILLED BECAUSE OF LACK OF POWER AND ALL BREAD IS RAPIDLY SELLING OUT. COOKING GAS IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE AND KEROSENE, ANOTHER COOKING SOURCE, IS BECOMING DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.

4. ASSUMING THAT LIVING CONDITIONS CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE, I BELIEVE WE MUST GIVE THOUGHT TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT AT SOME STAGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE IT MAY BE PRUDENT TO SEND OUR DEPENDENTS WIVES AND CHILDREN TO SAFEHAVEN AT A NEARBY POST UNTIL THE SITUATION STABILIZES. TOTAL NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS IS 17 (8 WIVES, 9 CHILDREN). IF NECESSARY AND THE SITUATION WARRANTS, WE MAY AT A LATER DATE BE OBLIGED TO REDUCE THE STAFF TO AN ESSENTIAL MINIMUM.

5. I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ABOVE AND STANDBY AUTHORITY FROM THE DEPARTMENT TO MOVE THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEPENDENTS IF IT PROVES NECESSARY.

6. THIS, THEN, IS ONLY A "GET READY" MESSAGE TO PERMIT US TO COPE WITH A CONTINGENCY THAT MAY NOT ARISE. I WOULD BE DERELICT, HOWEVER, IN NOT RAISING THE POSSIBILITY. GEORGETOWN'S ECONOMY IS SO WEAK THAT IT COULD UNRAVEL VERY QUICKLY UNDER THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES.
BURKE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SAFEHAVEN, EMERGENCY EVACUATION, FOOD SHORTAGE, WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM, DEPENDENTS, CONTINGENCY PLANNING, DISASTER REPORTS, RELIEF (ASSISTANCE), ELECTRIC POWER
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978GEORGE01066
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780151-0289
Format: TEL
From: GEORGETOWN JOINT
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780482/aaaacrjt.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f7a2d4b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 78 GEORGETOWN 1058
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3044439
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUTHORIZATION FOR SAFEHAVEN OF DEPENDENTS
TAGS: SOCI, ENRG, ABUD, AFSP, ASEC, APER, GY
To: STATE CARACAS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f7a2d4b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014